

THE
INTERNATIONALIST

UNIONISM & SOCIALISM
A CRITICISM OF
LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISM

SUMMER 1953

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**"UNIONISM AND SOCIALISM" - A CRITICISM OF THE
L.S.L. CONFERENCE RESOLUTION.....**

The reactionary influence of capitalism on the workers determine the forms of conservative union organization and the anti-working class policies they follow. These will probably exist in varying degree until and after proletarian revolution. Unfortunately for the L.S.L. resolution, the workers of the world do not march at the same pace to the overthrow of capitalism. Consequently, on the eve of revolution and after, the unions may very well be impure and even counter-revolutionary. This is so because of the specific conditions of uneven development of the class struggle in one or more countries. That is why it is so important to emphasize the need for the principles, program, and organization of a world party of Marxism. Only a workers' vanguard party can give direction to the class struggle, and lift it from the limits of narrow trade and craft union consciousness. This applies as well to the so-called industrial unions of the C.I.O., the Stalinist unions and a small group of unions that claim to be anti-capitalist. All these unions have amalgamated the crafts in their industries, but have not succeeded in wiping out narrow craft consciousness and wage inequalities.

The revolutionary situations that arose within our life time amply prove the correctness of emphasizing in a sharp manner the need for a revolutionary vanguard party and demonstrates that in most of these situations, the unions were ordinary capitalist unions or at best were anarcho-syndicalist.

The Russian October Revolution of 1917 found the unions conservative or middle of the road. Yet the revolutionary enthusiasm of the workers reached such a pitch that they forced these unions to support workers' councils and soviets. Left to themselves, there would not have been any workers' revolution. A revolutionary party, the Bolsheviks, succeeded in penetrating the mass organizations of the workers and got majority support from the soviets in the key centers of the Russian workers, Moscow and Petrograd.

The German Revolution of 1918 found the ordinary, run-of-the-mill, everyday capitalist unions supporting the soldiers, sailors and workers' councils. There was no revolutionary party leading them. The revolution was defeated and the soldiers, sailors, and workers' councils became from the bottom up, the foundation for the reconstruction of German capitalism. They elected the Social-Democrat, Ebert to the office of ~~PRESIDENT~~ to do the job. This created the conditions for the revival of the army officers' corps of German capitalism, and which later on carried out the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, under the police regime of the social-democrats, Noske and Scheideman.

On the other hand, the existence of a revolutionary party does not guarantee, either, the victory of a Socialist revolution. The German workers' party, The Spartacus Bund, the party founded by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg was a rather large revolutionary party, compared to the small revolutionary groups of the present period. Its principles, program and practice were revolutionary. Its mistake, a mistake in judging the immediate situation led to the defeat of the German revolution of 1921. The workers were not in a revolutionary mood, as the party thought. Consequently the Social-Democratic government was able to win in pitched battles against the contingents of the revolutionary party. Had there been no revolutionary party, there would have been no struggle of a revolutionary character at all. The unions were reformist, that is, social-democratic. They supported the government.

The Hungarian revolution of 1919 was defeated because there was no revolutionary party. The Hungarian Soviet regime was a coalition of petty-bourgeois democracy composed of social-democrats and liberal democrats in coalition with the Communist Party. This undermined the proletarian character of the revolution and enabled the counter-revolutionary Roumanian army to invade the country and smash the revolution.

The German revolution of 1923 was defeated because there was no revolutionary

I- LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST LEAGUE

II- CALLED THE COMMUNIST PARTY BY MAR. 1921

vanguard party. The right wing leadership of Brandler and Thalheimer lead the Communist party and the workers to defeat in face of the bloody opposition of the social democratic government, party and unions. The only effective part of the uprising was in Hamburg. The party in Hamburg was under Left-Communist leadership. If the whole German party had followed the line of the Left-Communist leadership of Urbahns, the whole history of Germany and the world working class would have been a history of the victory of socialism, instead of the victory of capitalism.

The uprising of the Austrian workers against the Dollfuss fascist dictatorship in 1934 was a revolutionary situation in which the unions reached a high point of Socialist consciousness. They wanted to fight with arms in hand for Socialism. They lost the struggle because the Social-Democratic party of Austria under the leadership of the "Austro-Marxist", Otto Bauer, dominated the unions for years with a program that vacillated between reform and revolution. The result was that it was impossible to convert the party and unions into revolutionary fighting organizations overnight after following a policy of parliamentary reform throught the history of the Austrian republic. The beautiful union housing projects, the cooperatives, and ~~workers~~ benefits, gave way to the regime of the concentration camp. A revolutionary vanguard party with such mass support would have turned defeat into victory and heretofore would have galvanized the German workers into successful action against Hitler.

In the Spanish War of 1936-1939, the unions were divided between the social democrats and anarcho-syndicalists. In the war against Franco, the Socialist Party of Spain and the Anarcho-Syndicalists entered a coalition called the Popular Front. In it also were the Stalinist United Socialist Party and the P.O.U.M. This was a coalition with the Basque Catholic Church and the "democratic" bourgeoisie of Spain. The social-democratic, anarchist, P.O.U.M., and Stalinist leadership in a revolutionary situation fought for bourgeois democracy instead of Socialism. The workers' militia, the collectivized farms, the factory committees were abolished step by step in order to rebuild a bourgeois army; and wipe out the dual power of the workers. Any revolutionary agitation was suppressed and declared illegal. Anyone caught was arrested and subject to the death sentence. Only a revolutionary vanguard party leading the organs of workers' control along the path of independent political, economic and military action against the peoples' front and Franco could have stopped the abolition of dual power and won the war for Socialism. A revolutionary victory in Spain would have swept all Europe onto the path of revolution, even in Stalin's Russia.

Many more examples could be given to show how decisive the role of a revolutionary party is compared to that of unions of any type which workers may form. We do not mean that unions are of no importance. They are. The revolutionaries must work inside them with the aim of winning the workers to revolutionary socialism. Generally, however, the pro-capitalist trade unions will remain so until the eve of revolution. It is not excluded that some unions may become anti-capitalist, but to over-estimate the role of the union in relation to the role of the party, in the mistaken belief that a Stalinist type of dictatorship will be avoided by that method, is a grave error. The root of Stalinism is the stabilization of world capitalism, and its restoration in Russia as a result of the temporary victory of capitalism over world revolution. The root of Stalinism is to be looked for in world economy, not in the mechanics of organization structure of party and unions. Stalinism retains "Socialist" forms of organization structure in the economy; in the unions, and in its party; but as a result of the restoration of capitalist policy within these structures, the revolutionary role of the party, which is the guardian of the organs of workers' control, was wiped out. In other words, the re-establishment of capitalism in Russia led to the abolition of the revolutionary party. The revolutionary vanguard party did not lead to Stalinism, that is, capitalism, in Russia. Rather, Stalinism lead to

the abolition of the revolutionary vanguard party, that is, the program, the ideology of revolutionary internationalism. Quoting from party history to prove that in Lenin's time, the party committed bureaucratic acts against the unions, is not sufficient to prove that stalinism flowed from leninism. To prove that stalinism flows from leninism, it is necessary first to prove that the leninist program of world revolution is the same as the stalinist program of socialism in one country, actually a program of socialism in no country. Secondly, it is necessary to prove that the leninist program of turning imperialist war into civil war is the same as the stalinist program of supporting and waging imperialist war. Thirdly, it is necessary to prove that the leninist program to smash the capitalist state is the same as the stalinist program to take over the capitalist state. Fourth, it is necessary to prove that the leninist policy of self-determination of the working class in each country is the same as the stalinist policy of oppression of the working class in the satellite countries. We are confident that the reactionary formula, "leninism equals stalinism", in time, will be abandoned by the comrades. If not, you will be compelled to falsify history to prove the impossible.

Regarding the development of party and unions in the U.S., this will be profoundly affected by the coming war between the Russian imperialist bloc and the American imperialist bloc. The crisis of U.S. capitalism in the face of rival Russian imperialism, is developing at a much faster rate than the class-consciousness of the workers. Should a revolutionary situation arise out of the war, the unions would reflect the whole past lag in the workers' consciousness. We also must take into account that the South is still comparatively backward industrially. Not even the conservative unions have taken hold there. This uneven development of the country, will most probably prevent the development of revolutionary industrial unions, and therefore realistic revolutionaries must place more importance on the leading role of a revolutionary party in building the organs of workers' control as the embryo of a Workers' State in this country.

At this point we wish to analyze the text of the resolution, No. 6 of the resolution is a masterpiece of confusion. It says: 2nd and 3rd sentence; "Other working class organizations, political, fraternal, cultural, etc., may have a useful role to play and accordingly Socialists may work to build them; but the basic role in the struggle for socialism is reserved for the unions. The success or failure of the Socialist movement hinges on the degree to which it penetrates the unions". If socialists may work to build other political parties, the only kind that they may conceivably build is a labor party. This leaves the road wide open to Trotskyist opportunism. Further, if the basic role in the struggle for socialism is reserved for unions, why encourage activities by socialists in less basic working class organizations, such as political, fraternal, cultural, etc. That is defeating the very purpose of socialism via unions. Again, if the basic role in the struggle for socialism is reserved for the unions, it is not necessary to have a party of socialism. The L.S.L. would be better off if it dissolved its group into the unions without delay. Further on, the last sentence of point 6 directly contradicts the preceding sentence. The preceding sentence assigns the basic role in the struggle for socialism to unions. The final sentence in No. 6 says, "The success or failure of the socialist movement hinges on the degree to which it penetrates the unions." In other words, the preceding sentence gives the leading role to unions, and the final sentence gives the leading role to a party of socialism.

No. 7, following the same zig-zag line, contradicts the last sentence of No. 6. It says; "Besides providing the power for abolishing capitalism, the unions are destined to become the organs of government of the new society. In no other way can the slogan "workers' control" be translated into reality. The victorious working class must use the unions as its instrument for debating, determining and finally, executing its policies in order that the following necessary

necessary activities may be carried on: (1) To maintain and coordinate production and distribution; (2) To maintain civilized order; (3) To defeat the resistance of anti-worker elements." The L.S.L. can't make up its mind whether the unions should play the leading role or whether the party should play the leading role. Earlier in this article the fate of the organs of workers' control in the absence of the leadership of a revolutionary party was dealt with. Let us add, since unions can only function in the economic sphere of the class struggle they can never express nor carry out the complete program of socialism. That is the task of the party which pulls all the parts of the class struggle together for the assault on world capitalism. The party is the instrument thru which the international revolution will bring to the fore the united power of the working class.

No. 8 confronts us with another zig-zag. The last sentence, which ends the resolution states: "The L.S.L. does want the complete abolition of all forms of exploitation, not a mere change in the personnel of exploiters, hence it proposes that the victorious Socialist movement on the day of its victory, turn all power over to the working class which will function thru its own economic organizations--the unions". If the unions are destined to become the organs of government in the new society, as stated in No. 7, why is it necessary for a Socialist movement to achieve victory in No. 8? If the unions are the basic instruments in the struggle for Socialism, why isn't their role basic in the Socialist victory? Why must there be a Socialist "elite" to turn over power to the unions that were destined for power in the first place?

The L.S.L.'s incorrect concept of the role of the party and the role of the unions leaves the road wide open to a Stalinist type of state. The correct concept is that the victory of the party of Socialism is the same as the victory of the workers. The party of Socialism does not "hand over power" to the workers, because it is the power of the workers. It embodies the whole of the socialist aspirations of the workers in theory and action. The unions only embody limited economic aims. The principles, program, and party of socialism represents the complete aim of workers' control, i.e., the establishment of a workers' government--a Workers' State--the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Unless the L.S.L. re-evaluates its unclear position on the role of the party and the role of the unions, it will lose in the ideological struggle to anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism, and to the American representatives of P.O.U.M. opportunism. The latter have already split your organization.

We hope with mutual discussion and class struggle activity the L.S.L. will finally take a revolutionary stand on this and other questions, and thus be able to hold its ranks.

"THE INTERNATIONALIST"

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Note: In view of contemplated revisions in the resolution, further criticism will be made in the near future.

UNIONISM AND SOCIALISM
A CRITICISM OF THE L.S.L. CONFERENCE RESOLUTION--PART 2

"The L.S.L. does want the complete abolition of all forms of exploitation, not a mere change in the personnel of exploiters, hence it proposes that the victorious Socialist movement on the day of its victory turn all power over to the working class which will function thru its own economic organizations--the unions". The above is the final sentence of the resolution. The L.S.L. National Conference of Dec. 1952, voted to accept the resolution with the amendment of the above quotation and for the rewriting of the whole resolution. Nothing has been amended or re-written. The instructions of the conference have not as yet been carried out. Since the revisions have not been made, we continue our criticism on the basis of the original resolution, because it reveals the false and contradictory ideas of the L.S.L., which no amount of patching up can hide.

ORWELL, ANARCHISM and "1984"

The final paragraph of the resolution, paragraph no. 8, next to the last sentence says: "The LSL wants no "1984", hence it declares war against the public corporations, state ownership, so-called workers' and farmers' governments and soviets on the Russian plan."

"1984" was written by George Orwell, English writer and anarchist. "1984" was written from the viewpoint of anarchism, which opposes all government. The substance of the book was distilled from Orwell's experience with Stalinism in the Spanish War of 1936-39, his experience with the British Labor Party variety of "socialism", the historic experience with Nazism, fascism, Russian Stalinism, all as part of the development on a world scale of totalitarianism or state-capitalism. His purpose was to show in an English setting, the tragic fate of the individual and the working class resulting from a victorious revolution that establishes a STATE to govern the new society..

Paragraph no. 7 of the resolution, first sentence, states: "Besides providing the power for abolishing capitalism, the unions are destined to become the organs of government of the new society". A government is a STATE. If it is a proletarian revolutionary government, it is a coercive instrument against the bourgeoisie. "1984" condemns the idea of "power", "government", "statism". The LSL according to its own statement is in favor of the unions as the organs of government of the new society. Therefore it is in favor of a STATE, a "trade union" STATE. Consequently, to refer to "1984", in the hope there never will be such a future condition of society, while advocating unions as the organs of government of the new society, is a basic contradiction. Further, dragging in "1984", contradicts the program of the LSL as amended by the National Conference of Dec. 1952. No. 5 of the program states next to last sentence: "...Thus, until the workers' power is secure, and a classless society is established, a coercive power directed against the bourgeoisie must exist." No. 9 of the program states, last sentence, "With the passing of political power to the working class, the economic organizations of the working class become the organs of government of the new society". That is exactly what "1984" is opposed to. It is opposed to POLITICAL POWER. It is therefore ridiculous to refer to "1984" when the LSL follows a line which leads to the world that "1984" abhors. George Orwell supported IMPERIALIST WAR II, and therefore became a supporter of capitalist political power, government, and authority.

On this as on other major questions, the LSL zig-zags between revolutionary Marxism and anarchism.

"Public Corporations & State Ownership"

The sentence beginning with, "The LSL wants no "1984", continues, "hence it declares war against the public corporations". This is correct. But the sentence continues; "state ownership", that is, the LSL declares war against state ownership too. This last is an anarchist formulation, in that no class distinction is made between Workers' State ownership and Capitalist State ownership. WE are in favor of the former, against the latter.

"Workers' & Farmers' Governments"

In the next clause of the same sentence, the LSL declares war against: "...so-called workers' and farmers' governments". A workers' and Farmers' government is

the result of an electoral victory of the political arm of capitalist trade unions, a labor party, in which it is given the mandate to administer the capitalist state. It may govern in coalition with agrarian political parties, as has been the case in Austria, pre-war Hungary, Norway, Sweden, pre-war Czechoslovakia, Denmark, where the labor parties have always been social democratic. It may be a unity in a single labor party, between the capitalist trade unions and bourgeois liberalism, as in the British Isles. The agrarian economy has very little weight in that country and therefore no independent agrarian movement exists. It may take the form of the French peoples' front government of Leon Blum in 1936, or the form of a Blum-Cachin government theoretically, advocated by the Trotskyists. It may also be as the Spanish peoples' front government of 1936-39.

Whatever political form "workers' and farmers' governments" take, they remain pro-capitalist and anti-working class. It becomes a political force under three main conditions: (1) when the discussion and meaning of socialism creates a ferment in the working class as a result of an economic depression; (2) when the workers become conscious of themselves as a class as a result of failure to get reforms of capitalism thru the classic bourgeois political parties; (3) when the workers want to overthrow capitalism as a result of war-weariness and are misguided in electing to office capitalist trade union leaders, under the illusion such a government would establish socialism. Thus such a government succeeds in staving off workers' revolution in the absence of a mass supported revolutionary marxist party.

The LSL resolution is correct in opposing a "workers' and farmers' government". Its opposition, however, is feeble and contradictory. This is revealed in the program of the LSL. No. 7 of the Program, next to last sentence, says: "Our attitude toward any labor party established would depend on the prospects it presents for winning its members to socialism". The "socialism" of all labor parties is piecemeal reform, which the LSL opposes in No. 6 of its program. Labor parties initiate or support capitalist state nationalization, which we assume, the LSL opposes. Labor parties support "the bare faced robbery of the workers by its economic master in Western Capitalism", which the LSL opposes in No. 1 of its program. Labor parties support Imperialist war and capitalist war economy, which the LSL opposes in No. 2 and No. 3 of its program. Labor parties oppose the struggle of the colonial masses for freedom from Imperialism. No. 3 of the program of the LSL supports these struggles. Labor parties support national patriotism against the international solidarity of the working class. No. 3 of the program of the LSL supports the international solidarity of the working class against national patriotism. There can be only one attitude toward a labor party, if the LSL is not to follow the path of Trotskyism of the Cannon or Schachtman variety. It must consistently oppose a Labor Party, both ideologically and organizationally. That means it must oppose "Labor" and "socialist" candidates, telling the workers that a vote for these candidates as well as for the classic capitalist party candidates is a vote for the continued existence of capitalism and all its works. All the capitalist masters want you to do is vote, and thus by that act recognize the validity of bourgeois society. Only an INDEPENDENT REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST PARTY, WHICH MUST BE BUILT, is a vote against capitalism. In the building of such a party, parallel with carrying the voice of Revolutionary Marxism into the unions on a class struggle basis, is the correct policy as opposed to an attitude "determined by the prospects a labor party presents for winning its members to socialism". Unless an independent revolutionary party is built, a labor party will win the workers to "state socialism" (nationalization of property by a capitalist state-state capitalism).

The Single Party Idea

Further, the "Unionism and Socialism" resolution is in direct conflict with the Program of the LSL. Section No. 6 of the Program defines and condemns reformism, bolshevism, and sectarianism. In defining bolshevism, it condemns it for holding to the "single party idea". This is the same as saying that bolshevism is "totalitarian". Yet the "Socialism and Unionism" resolution is opposed to the rule of many parties, or to the rule of two or more parties under capitalism. Is not the resolution opposed to a "workers' and farmers' government". Of course it is. Is not

the Program against "the single party idea". It certainly is. We can therefore conclude that the LSL is against the rule of a coalition under capitalism, and for coalition in a victorious socialist revolution (for that's what being against the "single party idea" means). This is the dilemma the LSL cannot resolve. The whole idea of opposition to coalition (workers' and farmers' government) is to prevent compromising the interests of the workers with the enemy class, and thereby clear the road for the independent revolutionary class party to lead the struggle for a victorious socialist revolution. Certainly, then, coalition under workers' rule with the compromisers of the enemy class would be idiotic when the workers need a coercive power of their own to prevent the bourgeoisie from restoring capitalist rule.

The Spanish War of 1936-39 finally proved that the reformist and pseudo-revolutionary organizations within the working class were historically reactionary. It proved conclusively that the rule of many "revolutionary" parties under workers' rule is a political dream. In a situation which demanded the establishment of workers' rule as the only road to follow in order to defeat Franco Fascism, anarcho-syndicalism, social-democracy, stalinism, the POUM, supported capitalism by joining the anti-Franco capitalist parties in the Peoples' Front, a coalition government. The Trotskyists supported the coalition with material aid and "political criticism". The Peoples' Front policy led to the victory of Spanish fascism. Only the workers of Barcelona and the "Friends of Durutti", in the May, 1937 uprising awoke to the need of Socialist revolution. The anarcho-syndicalists, the social-democrats, the stalinists, the POUM, are responsible for the suppression of the revolt. Our LEFT-COMMUNIST comrades were run out of Barcelona by the gun-men of the anarcho-syndicalist bureaucracy for advocating the defeat of both capitalist forces, the peoples' front and fascism, and the establishment of WORKERS' RULE thru the leadership of a revolutionary marxist party. If the revolutionary marxists had been able to win the workers to the only policy that could lead to Socialist revolution, do the comrades of the LSL think that "Workers' Democracy" would be established by sharing power with the reformists and pseudo-revolutionary organizations, all of whom opposed the socialist revolution? The victorious socialist revolution would be smashed by the capitalist counter-revolution. Would the revolutionary government, party, and soviets permit the legal existence of these organizations? That is a tactical question, the answer to which is: "YES". If the political and economic situation of the proletarian dictatorship is stable enough to make the efforts of these organizations to overthrow the revolution hopeless.

The LSL is obsessed with a moral concept which prevents it from understanding that in the struggle of classes, there is the struggle of parties, and in this struggle the party which is Marxist, and can win the workers, will win the revolution, and it will be the victorious party, the only form that the complete expression of the revolutionary platform and ideology can take.

Engels wrote the following in a polemic against the anarchists. This writer thinks it applicable to the LSL. "Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? Revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritative thing possible. It is an act in which one section of the population imposes its will on the other by means of rifles, bayonets, cannon, i.e., by highly authoritative means, and the victorious party is inevitably forced to maintain its supremacy by means of that fear which its arms inspire in the reactionaries". Engels (from a polemic published in 1873 in an Italian Socialist publication, translated into German in 1913 and published in Neue Zeit.

"Soviets on the Russian Plan"

The same sentence in the "Socialism and Unionism" resolution, which opposes workers' and Farmers' governments, paragraph 8, next to final sentence, also opposes "soviets on the Russian plan". Anyone unfamiliar with the history of the Russian soviets would think, reading this part of the resolution, that "soviets on the Russian plan", and we add, the Russian trade unions as well, were always stalinist-Malenkovist. When stated in the manner of the resolution, it is too abstract, and leaves the impression that the soviets, and we add, the unions, had no past development differentiating them from the pseudo-soviets and pseudo-unions of the stalinist-malenkovist regime. Soviets and unions existed under the Czar, the Kerensky government, and under the revolutionary regime of Lenin and Trotsky. In the political

conditions existing under each regime, the soviets and unions played a role. Soviets and unions as revolutionaries have always understood the terms, do not exist in Russia today. Since the proletarian dictatorship in Russia has ceased to exist the soviets and unions as they are in Russia now are no longer organs of workers' control. There is no link, therefore, between the soviets and unions under Lenin, in the sense of their revolutionary class role, and the STATE-CAPITATIST role of the present-day fake soviets and unions. If there is a link, it is the link of the murderer to the murdered, of the counter-revolution against the revolution.

Thirty-four years ago, Eugene Victor DEBS had a more correct view than the LSL does now. "Lenin and Trotsky were the men of the hour and under their fearless, incorruptible and uncompromising leadership the Russian proletariat has held the fort against the combined assaults of all the ruling class powers on earth". (E.V. Debs; "The Day of the People". The Class Struggle, Feb 1919, P.I.). Elsewhere he wrote: "The Red Russian Republic, the monumental achievement of the ages and the crowning glory of our century, under the superb and inspiring leadership of Lenin, Trotsky and their equally high-souled and lionhearted compatriots, is battling bravely, immortally, against the autocracy of all the empires of imperialism for the emancipation of all the people of the world". (Debs, The Liberator, Dec. 1922)

Lenin, in his final message to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union wrote: "I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority: namely more tolerant, more loyal, more civil and more considerate to comrades..." (Lenin's Testament). This was a declaration of war against Stalinism by Lenin. It was a directive to Trotsky and the left-opposition to remove the heart of the Stalinist cancer from the position of general-secretary of the party. Trotsky, mistakenly believing compromise was possible, not seeing the full significance of the unfolding counter-revolution, did not in the beginning carry out Lenin's directive. When Max Eastman published Lenin's Testament in his book; "Since Lenin Died" in 1925, Trotsky denounced Max Eastman. Nine years later, long after the left-opposition was expelled from the stalinized Communist International, Trotsky wrote in a letter to Muratov: "My then statement on Eastman can be understood only as an integral part of our then line toward conciliation and peace-making". (The New International, Nov. 1934). Had Lenin's policy of no compromise with Stalinism been carried out, the political fiction that Leninism leads to Stalinism would die the death it deserves.

Lenin and the Left-Opportunity were for workers' participation in the operation and management of industry and the State thru the methods of workers' control as opposed to bureaucratic methods of appointments etc. pursued by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Lenin, himself, was aware of insufficient representation of the toilers in management of industry and the State. He wrote: "The Soviet apparatus in words is accessible to all toilers, in reality it is far from being so...Up to now we have not reached the point where the toiling masses can participate in the management". (Lenin, collected works, vol xvi). Further: "To struggle against the bureaucracy to the final victory will be possible only when the entire population will participate in the work of management". (ibid).

The policy of Stalinism was the opposite. It took the road of State-capitalism, the road of counter-revolution. In September 1929, it made an iron formula, its forcible abolition of workers' control of production. "Soviet Union Communists must help to establish order and discipline in the factory. Members of the Communist Party, union representatives, shop committees, are instructed not to interfere in QUESTIONS OF MANAGEMENT". Decision of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.; Freiheit, Sep 9, 1929).

In contrast to the Stalinist-Malenkovist abolition of workers' control, the first Russian Trade Union Congress of 1918 declared that the trade unions as class organizations of the proletariat have to undertake the organization of production. The resolution of this Congress directed the workers "to participate most energetically in all the administrative departments of production, to organize the labor boards of control, the registration and distribution of labor, and the exchange of labor between the village and the city; to fight against sabotage and establish complete labor cooperation and discipline."

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At the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1919, the resolution on Trade Union policy written by Lenin, stated: "The organizing apparatus of national industry must be based primarily on the trade unions. In harmony with the existing laws of the Soviet Republics and established practice the members of the local and central organs of the management of industry and the trade unions must get into their own hands the actual centralized management of the economic life, as a single economic unit. The trade unions must in the largest measure persuade the toiling masses to participate immediately in the administration of economics."

Lenin's aim was more and more workers' control. The problem agitating the leaders and rank-and-file of that period was the role of trade unions in a workers' state; their relationship to the workers' government; and their relationship to the then revolutionary Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Lenin opposed Trotsky's theory of merging the trade unions with the government. He argued; "The most sensible thing just now in relation to this "merging" is to be silent. Why? Because actually we have already done the merging. We have not a single provincial soviet of national economy, an important branch of the Supreme Soviet of National Economy, or the Commissariat of Transportation, where there is not practical merging. But are the results completely satisfactory? There's the rub. We have as yet not thoroughly assimilated the sum total of our experience. Therefore, the sensible department in regard to this question of merging is: silence." (Lenin, collected works, vol. 26)

Trotsky maintained that trade unions under a workers' government did not have to defend the interests of the workers in the same sense as they do under capitalism. Lenin replied: "Ours is a workers' government with a bureaucratic twist. Our present government is such that the proletariat, organized to the last man, must protect itself against it. And we must use the workers' organizations for the protection of the workers against their government". (ibid).

Further: "The trade unions must assume responsibility for the protection of the interests of the workers, help as much as possible to improve their material condition, continually correct the mistakes and excesses of the administrative departments in so far as they are the result of bureaucratic perversion of the government apparatus. Under no circumstance is it advisable to demand of the trade union members a specific political viewpoint. In this matter just as on the question of religion the trade unions must be non-partisan. In a proletarian state the trade union members should only be asked to understand comradely discipline and the absolute need of a united labor power for the protection of the interests of the toilers." (Lenin, collected works, vol. 27).

On the other hand, Lenin opposed the "Workers' Opposition". Lenin's position was that the policy of the "Workers' Opposition" was a complete break with Communism and the adoption of anarcho-syndicalism since the Opposition held that the dictatorship of the proletariat must be exercised by the trade unions. Since nine-tenths of the trade union members were not Communists, the substitution of the trade unions for the party in the exercise of workers' rule, Lenin held, endangered the revolution. Lenin's position was correct.

However, Tensky, Kollantai, Shliapnikov, their compatriots, and Bukharin who advanced similar arguments were not anarcho-syndicalists. They were BOLSHEVIKS. They wished to REFORM the Bolshevik ranks. To appropriate their platform in an attempt to prove that Lenin was the "father of Malenkov and Stalin the Holy Ghost", is to twist history a little too much.

The Labor Opposition based itself on the Bolshevik platform "on trade union management of industry". They differed with Lenin on how to apply the platform. The Opposition wanted a reorganization in the ranks of the Communist Party. Its aim on the questions of government, party, and unions, was to get rid of all non-proletarians and peasants who became members of the party after the middle of 1918; the preponderant majority of government posts to be operated by workers who have not given up physical labor. To put teeth into that proposal, the "Labor Opposition" demanded that every member of the Party work at physical labor for a minimum of three months each year, in the factories, or in the iron ore and coal mines. In addition they demanded that in the three month work period the party member be required to live under the same conditions as all other workers in the industry.

The Opposition" felt these requirements would keep non-proletarian functionaries and administrators in contact with the rank-and-file.

Soviets

As far as the Soviets are concerned, it is extreme political vulgarism to pose the question in the form of opposition to "Soviets on the Russian plan". There are no "soviets on the Russian plan" and there never were.

The Soviet October Revolution of 1917 in Russia was the continuation of the revolutionary ideology of the Paris Commune of March 1871. What was the nature and function of the Commune? Karl Marx answers the question of the nature of the Commune: "The direct antithesis of the Empire was the Commune. It was the positive form of a republic that was not only to supersede the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself". (The Civil War in France")

Further, Marx explains its function: "The first decree of the Commune...was the suppression of the standing army and the substitution for it of the armed people (ibid). Furthermore: "The Commune was formed of municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the Administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workman's wages. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves..."

Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parson power"... The judicial functionaries were to be divested of their sham independence...Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable." (ibid)

What is the nature and function of Soviets? The Soviet is a form of workers' representation in a pre-revolutionary, and revolutionary situation. After a successful proletarian revolution the Soviet becomes the form of government of the working class.

How is a Soviet formed? "Instead of electing men at the polls, they are elected in the shops and unions; for example, every 500 workers in a munitions factory elect a delegate, as do the clothing shops, the brickyards, glass works, and all the other industries in that city. The different unions do likewise. The regiments of soldiers and sailors also elect their delegates; likewise the teachers the clerks, and the engineers who are organized". (The Bolsheviks and the Soviets" by Albert Rhys Williams"-1919)

What is the function of the Soviet? The Soviet, arising from a group (shop or union), meets regularly and electing its delegates, creates a natural unity of the workers. Their delegates are miners who know mines; machinists who know machines; peasants who know the land; teachers who know children and education. The Soviets must transact business, in its local and national assemblies on varied problems, such as war, peace, land, commerce, etc. Always with the class interests of the toiling workers and peasants in mind. If a delegate or delegates ignore the interests of the workers and peasants, the Soviet can immediately recall them and elect new delegates to take their place. The salary of delegates and functionaries appointed by them must not be more than that of the average worker. The Soviet thus acts to prevent the rise of a bureaucracy. (Lenin received \$60 a month. He would have received \$10 extra for every non-earning member of the family, but his wife was working in the Department of Education. Trotsky had a wife and two children, therefore he got \$90 a month). The Soviets, with the unions, exert workers' control. According to Trotsky, workers' control means the following: "I mean by control, that we will see to it that the factory is run not from the point of view of private profit, but from the point of view of social welfare... For example, we will not allow the capitalist to shut up his factory in order to starve his work-

men into submission, or because it is not yielding him a profit. If it is turning out economically a needed product, it must be kept running. If the capitalist gives it up, he will lose it altogether for a board of directors chosen by the workmen will be put in charge.

Again, "control" implies that the books and correspondence of the concern will be open to the public, so that henceforth there will be no industrial secrets. If this concern hits on a better process or device, it will be given to other concerns in the same branch of industry. Thus the public will promptly realize the utmost possible benefit from the find." (From an interview with Trotsky by Professor E.A. Ross of Wisconsin University.)

It is obvious, therefore, that the nature and function of soviets was never according to a Russian plan, but the international characteristic of the conscious state of the struggle of the working class against the world bourgeoisie. It does not matter whether the dual power of the working class is called workers' councils, factory committees, or soviets, so long as the class struggle and internationalist character of these organs of workers' control is retained.

Conclusion

In his time, even Morris Hillquit, right wing Socialist leader, was more advanced in his thinking than the Libertarian Socialist League is today.

He wrote: "The Russian Revolution has taken possession of the government in the name of the workers. It has effectively expropriated private capitalist owners and has nationalized the greater part of the industries. It has also written into its program the socialization of the land. Measured by all practical tests it is therefore a Socialist revolution in character as well as intent". "From Marx to Lenin" by Morris Hillquit-1921, page 34, #1.

ADDRESS
COMMUNICATIONS TO

P O BOX 44 BX.60 NY

SUBSCRIPTIONS

1.00 A

YEAR

1. we agree on the following

Point One

~~Point 2~~ - against Race war camp

3 -

5.

Point A ✓

Point B ✓

Point C ✓

~~to~~ we disagree with point 4 because
it ~~requires~~ gives complete support
to the State

ADDRESS

TO COMMUNICATIONS

The State ~~is~~ ^{an} ~~is~~ ^{creation} ~~is~~ ^{is} a fundamental
pillar of monopoly ~~was~~ ^{is} the state

This view ~~on the~~ ^{on the} State leads to
opportunities

no position on the State ✓

no position on the Church ✓

no position on the ~~State~~

~~on the State~~

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Last paragraph of Point 6

RAY

A statement on the nature of the
conservative labor movement is well
in the structure of capitalism & State